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ROGERS REPORTS:

A Method to Non-Secret Madness

By WARREN ROGERS

WASHINGTON—One of the truly wacky things about life in the atomic age is what the strategy of deference has done to what Allen W. Dulles calls "the craft of intelligence."

It is difficult for the layman, or even people like journalists working on the periphery of intelligence activities, to figure out what is a fit subject for mass dissemination.

It is an old political trick for a Washington administration to classify as secret anything that might keep it from getting re-elected. It is a new trick for governments to publicize their military secrets to deter a potential enemy from launching atomic war against them.

The latest case in point is a brochure, highly illustrated and statistically detailed, about the Atomic War Control Center being built inside Cheyenne Mountain at Colorado Springs, Colo. This is such a highly informative piece of literature that your first reaction is that the U.S. Air Force must be out of its mind to tell so much to the Russians.

Trained intelligence agents will pay thousands of dollars and risk their lives for the serial number of an obscure engine. It seems astonishing then that the North American Air Defense Command should reveal in words, photographs, tables and charts that its Combat Operations Center will be fully "hardened" and ready for action by late 1965.

But there is method to such seeming madness. The Air Force wants the Russians to know just how tough it would be to try to knock out the center from



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which America would retaliate against atomic attack. In any emergency, two huge doors would seal it off from the outside world, leaving the 750-man staff and electronic control equipment virtually impregnable under 1,200 to 1,400 feet of solid granite. The nearly three miles of tunnels, with some chambers big enough to house a three-story building, were formed by blasting out 470,000 cubic yards of granite.

The Pentagon also has another motive for publicizing the war center in such great detail. It helps build public support, and therefore Congressional support, for the astronomical funds requested each year for national defense. Thoughtful observers often wonder whether this consideration might not be paramount, and also whether it might cause the Pentagon to give away too many secrets to the Russians.

The Air Force, like the Defense Department generally, goes on the theory that the Russians have little trouble ferreting out some U.S. military secrets anyway. The feeling is that, since ours is an open society, bits and pieces appear in newspapers, magazines and trade journals, and all the Russian spies have to do is put them all together, analyze them and decide what it all means.

Such fatalism does not apply across the board, of course. For example, the Russians are struggling to develop a Polaris-type submarine, and the Pentagon would consider it a grave development if one of our missile-firing subs fell into their hands. The same applies to any new weapon, particularly those in development which might produce a genuine breakthrough, such as the XB-70 supersonic bomber.

But in broad matters, like the knockout-proof control center under Cheyenne Mountain or even like the numbers of missiles and bombers, the attitude is just the opposite.

It is rather like flexing your muscles, or tearing a telephone book in half to show your strength. The idea is not so much to intimidate and terrify—which appears to be the Soviet aim when Premier Khrushchev boasts about 100-megaton bombs. Rather, it is to deter war, which is a pretty good idea.